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## WORKING PARTIES

OUR current controversy on Party "passengers" has provoked some interesting reactions. It's very easy to see the problem as one of "workers v. drones" (as indeed one reader did last month) and divide our membership into two apparently antagonistic sections. This might well be a quick way to political suicide. But really the problem cannot be tackled in this cavalier manner, and we shudder to think of the administrative problems alone which would be involved.

In any mass Party there are all kinds of folk with varying grades of political enthusiasm and capacity. There's the chap who's not over keen on meetings but who puts in a tidy bit of work at election times. There's the woman who has a liking for social activities but no talent at all for political debate and discussion. Are they to be dubbed as "drones" just because they don't fit someone's pet idea of what a Party member should be? We don't think so.

It might help if we all tried to set our own houses in order before talking too much about "drones." Are our Party meetings attractive to newcomers? Do we give them a comradely welcome? Do we spread the jobs and see that everyone has something to do? Do we lie fallow between elections?

We don't believe there is any heaven-sent administrative solution to what is essentially a human and individual problem. And in fact in scores of our best parties the problem hardly exists. Such parties have already drawn a sizeable proportion of their total membership into their multifarious activities. They have made Labour Party work what it should be—an exciting, absorbing job which is always worth while, often tiring but never humdrum or dull. Along these lines we can, and in many cases are, showing that a mass party can also be a Working Party.

GETTING THE VOTE OUT

## Fetch 'Em Up!

By JOHN PINKERTON

"Fetch 'em up" will be heard in many dialects throughout England and Wales on November 1st, Polling Day in all Borough Council elections (November 4th in Scotland). These words, crude though they be, refer to a vital task, for failure to fetch up the Labour voters may mean the difference between winning or losing a majority on the Council.

Poor or mediocre polling organisation makes completely useless all your previous efforts, and time and money is wasted. The cogitations of the editor of your election address have been of little value, the printer of the address will have transposed into type many hundreds of words and used much paper and ink to little purpose, and many pairs of shoes of canvassers will be made thinner after their perambulations through the streets; all worthless, because of your inability to tie up the loose ends of your polling day organisation.

Efficiency on this day is equally, if not more important than all the other work which has been done, and no words can over-stress the value of polliers (fetchers-up) committee room clerks, checkers and messengers.

This year the task of your workers on polling day is going to be made more difficult by virtue of the fact that polling day is on a Saturday, and all agents will agree that this is not the ideal day.

## Saturday Technique

Shopping for the women folk is heavier than on most other days of the week, there is the competition of football matches and other sports efforts, plus the Saturday night visit to the cinema by a wide section of the electorate. In consequence of these factors, it may be necessary to change your usual practice in order to meet these circumstance.

There may be some opportunity, however, of getting the housewife to vote on her way to the local shops. It would be particularly unwise to approach her while she was heavily laden with baskets and parcels. There may be the opportunity of taking the

loud speaker vehicle amongst the shopping crowds. This has its disadvantage in that you would also be reminding your opposition that it was polling day. Care, however, in the use of the loud speaker vehicle should be used. If the shopping centre was in a distinctly Labour area, then it might have a good psychological effect. This would equally apply to using the loud speaker on the route to the football ground, but consideration on this matter would have to be done on the spot and no firm suggestions can be laid down.

Workers, therefore, should be recruited in sufficient numbers to cover the periods at which most people would be likely to go to the poll.

### Canvass is Vital

It is naturally assumed that an endeavour is being made to make a complete canvass. This is, of course, a necessity, if you are going to know where your Labour vote is. As the canvass is proceeding, the favourable cards, if the canvass is being done on individual cards, will have been filed in the street boxes. If the ordinary register is being used, the wall sheets will have been marked in red.

On the eve of the poll all the material necessary for the polling district committee rooms will have been taken there and either the favourable cards put in simple cardboard folders in street order and put into trays ready for giving to the polliers as they report for duty, or the wall sheets will have been pinned up in serial order.

Adequate staff should have been recruited and instructions sent to them where to report with a rota of duties, and a committee room clerk will be detailed to each polling district committee room.

His staff will comprise, for indoor purposes, not more than a sufficient number of clerks to deal adequately with the job, marking off and attending to any other duties which may arise; for outdoor purposes, checkers and messengers, car pilots, and a general band of poliers. A list of available cars and drivers will have been made out.

On the morning of polling day the clerk will open the committee room before the time for the opening of the poll, the first checkers will be at the polling station to get the numbers of people as they poll and the clerk will be ready to mark off the wall sheet or take from the tray the card relating to the person having polled.

Early Does It

The first group of polliers or fetchersup will start on their work about nine o'clock and will visit suitable streets with the appropriate "For" cards as guides. Their duty will be to persuade the womenfolk to go to vote. The importance of getting electors to the poll as early as possible ensures that later in the day, when the menfolk come to the polling station on their way from work, there will not be queues of people waiting to record their votes. All those that can vote in the early morning slack period should be persuaded to do so.

You can supply your polliers with small slips for handing to the voters, containing words such as "Kindly poll for Smith." This work will go on continuously, sometimes slackly, sometimes in greater volume, as the hours pass by. Such cars as are available will have been put into use during the morning and early afternoon in order to bring up the invalid voters. During this time the committee room clerk will have been marking off on the wall sheet or transferring from the "For" tray, the cards of the respective voters.

The slacker periods will enable him

to get into necessary order cards from the most thickly populated supporters' area so that the greatest number of workers can be sent into that area at the psychological moment. He should deal kindly but firmly with all those who visit the committee room only for the purpose of having a chat.

## Keys to Victory

The number of favourable voters still to record their votes can be easily determined by a quick glance at the number of favourable cards still left in the street trays or the number of red ticks on the wall sheets not crossed out. The tempo of the work should be maintained until every single favourable vote has been cast and all red ticks crossed through on the wall sheets or all favourable "For" votes shown in the "Voted" tray.

If this is achieved you will at any

If this is achieved you will at any rate be able to say that your organisation was successful, and if defeated that more propaganda will have to be put in. You will not have that feeling of recrimination either with yourself or other members of the Party by having to say that if only another dozen voters had been brought up your candidate would have been elected.

Your knowledge of where your Labour vote is and your ability and success in getting it to the poll are the two keys to final victory. Persistence and zeal in your appeals to the electors, plus method in recording the result of these efforts, are the main ingredients. The urgency of this task must be impressed on your electors.

## **Keep Your November Records**

By J. P. BLACKBURN

A local Party Chairman here outlines his plan for a successful membership drive

IN reading Councillor Burnett's article in the August "Organiser" on "How not to make members," not one agent, secretary or humble canvasser will disagree with him and his expressed views.

We have all seen the troubled look on the faces of members when a mass canvass for membership has been suggested, and we have heard the hurriedly thought-up excuses for not taking part in such a trying and nerveracking expedition. And no wonder, one would have thought that our repeated experiences of such canvasses would have taught us that mere blind mass canvassing, house to house, road by road, is a most haphazard and uneconomic method of membership recruitment, uneconomic in the expenditure of time, and all members and officers complain that time is too short, and how much could have been done if more time were available. Agreed are we? Then why waste

it? Has every party Management Committee explored every avenue of increasing membership? I doubt it.

### What's Wrong?

It would seem that the reason why such a method is adopted is because it appears in the first instance to be the easiest. All one need do is to get a copy of the current register, a few membership forms, and off we go, and after having spent a great deal of time, and expended a lot of breath, we return much abashed, but with few members, and even the most thick-skinned and experienced of us feel that the evening really hasn't been as worthwhile as it might have been.

The more diffident are really scared and usually missing on the next night set aside for this job. It is this visiting the unknown that is so terrifying, and there are very few people who are really happy when doing it. When analysed, the results are nowhere near those desired, and that being so, let us examine the other possibilities.

First, let us take any existent ward or party membership, and the figures as shown in the annual report of the party indicate that there is an individual membership in every constituency in the country. Is the membership in any one of those composed of individuals and friends known to one another, and outside that number there is no one at all whose sympathies are unknown to any member of the party? I doubt it.

Have all of us sat down with a pencil and paper and written down the names of all the people with whom we are on friendly speaking terms, and have we asked them to become individual members of the party? I think not.

I would go further and suggest that each of the individual members of the patry in the country have each a friend who is not a member and who with very little persuasion would immediately join up. The difference that would make in the total individual membership is obvious.

### Another Method

The second method, and one that is more akin to the mass canvass, is selecting from the previous parliamentary and local election canvass those who are known Labour voters, those who actually promised and who indicated by the handing of the poll card to the checker at the polling station that they had fulfilled their promise.

Here is a vast field of potential membership. Yes, you say, we know all this, but we have not a record of the canvasses; they have been lost or destroyed, and in any case we've never had a complete canvass.

Well, you'll have a chance to rectify that this November when you make your canvass the most important feature of your campaign, and then you carefully sift the records and have ample material to work on for the whole of the next spring and summer months, recruiting known sympathisers into the ranks, making comrades of them and ensuring that the work of the local elections next year and of the party in general will be more effectively and more efficiently done by having more workers to share the burden of the task.

### It's a Pleasure

In adopting the above method not only will you have more success, but you'll make canvassing for members a pleasure instead of a nightmare. The people you will be visiting will be sympathetic to you from the start. Many, you will find, have been waiting to be asked to join—their own diffidence having prevented them from taking the initial step or searching out the ward secretary.

Literature sales campaigns are also another means of ascertaining who is sympathetic to the cause.

In concluding, I would add another don't to Mr. Burnett's—that is: Don't embark upon membership canvass and recruitment without some knowledge of the people you are going to visit. You will be spending a lot of time without making a great number of members.

If you have a lot of time to spare, then indulge in a mass literature campaign and make a note of where you have made sales to people who evinced interest in what the party stands for, and then follow up with a visit to enrol those people into membership.

Recruitment can be carried on steadily throughout the year in these quiet efficient ways, but it needs to be tackled on the basis of records already in the possession of the party concerned.

## **Agents' Charter Moves**

By L. H. M. HILLIARD, General Secretary, National Union of Labour Organisers and Election Agents

> Mr. Hilliard is the Union's new General Secretary. He will be contributing a monthly article from now on

Conference now seems a long way off, but decisions recorded have had their effect upon the Union's work and organisation. Failure by the Executive Committee to carry rules amendment relating to life membership inevitably meant that a change of General Secre-

taryship would be necessary.

Rules prohibited that election should take place at Conference and so, as members will be aware, nominations had to be called for and a ballot taken, by post. While these changes have been taking place a gap has occurred in development work and in negotiations relating to agency service, but this gap has now been "stopped" and work goes forward.

## Charter Proposals Carried

THAT the Charter Proposals were carried is "stale" news, but what was surprising was the astonishing amount of unanimity expressed in relation to these suggestions. In fact, comparatively little discussion took place on these new conditions of service because there was so much general agreement and, finally, they were carried with overwhelming support.

All districts now seem very anxious to learn what progress has been made towards implementing the Charter, but so far the Executive Committee has not been able to meet the Adjustments Board on the matter. An early meeting is promised and we can expect some

progress to be made.

Associate membership, something of a hardy perennial, was proposed by London District, but was defeated, the principle having been discussed rather than the specific motions, but a suggestion to add to the representation on the Executive was carried, and in future this will be related to the numerical strength of the Districts.

Talking over "Lancashire's" resolution relating to magisterial appointments, which had been referred to the E.C., an interesting suggestion has emerged which will be followed up. Most agents deal with a constant

stream of enquiries, many of which need only to have a paper signed or a declaration made.

Consequently many Parties secure the appointment of their agents as J.P.s in order that these matters may be dealt with, but this in turn thrusts additional responsibilities upon the agent which he, or she, may find difficult to discharge.

We feel that there might possibly be a new schedule to the Act to provide for a new class of J.P.s who would be empowered to take declarations, but would not have duties to discharge on the bench.

## An Appreciation

ONE cannot leave even this brief review of Annual Conference of the Union without making reference to the magnificent work done for the Union by Dick Stanton during his period of office as General Secretary. His was the inspiration behind the Charter proposals, and I am sure we all regret that the rules prevented him from carrying through the negotiations that will be necessary. All our members will, I am sure, join me in wishing him success in the future, and in his new sphere of activity on the staff of the "Daily Herald."

After Conference came the Union Dinner. Agents rarely have time off for social functions so that it was refreshing to see so many old and new colleagues gathered together and pleasant to renew old friendships and "swap" reminiscences. Some of us have tended to feel, in the past, that the value of agency work has not been fully appreciated, nor the difficulties properly understood. Philip Noel Baker's remarks, therefore, at the dinner were particularly welcome, and most cheering in view of the negotiations that are pending. Clearly goodwill exists and the value of agency service freely acknowledged!

It would be most helpful and useful, if, next year, all our members attend-

ing Conference could stay together in the same hotel. I think this has been done in the past successfully, and London District did it quite well last year. Anyhow, plans are now being made and a block booking taken for some 150 members who are urged to bear this in mind and take advantage of this facility when advance information is given. When I send you some "hard" news, make a provisional booking early, so that we can find out where we stand. Adjustments can always be made later, if necessary.

Fact Finding

LONDON District is now busy seeking facts! A questionnaire has been issued to members calling for information which will enable the District to get a clear picture of the effect of the Boundary Commission's proposals upon its members. So far it is clear that a number of agencies will disappear and a certain amount of redundancy will occur. Many interesting suggestions have been made by members! There seems to be a general feeling that agents displaced should be accorded some special consideration in relation to new appointments, and that where a reduction of appointment takes place in a given area the principle (all things being equal) of seniority should be applied.

Other changes occur in the district. Our old friend and colleague, A. E. Nunn, takes over the job of Financial Secretary and Treasurer, and "Vic" Butler, young, keen, and enthusiastic, becomes the new District Secretary. I am sure London District will continue to make good progress.

### We Shall Remember

BEN WILSON'S tragic death, referred to in the last issue of the "Organiser," means that the Union mourns the loss of a good and loyal colleague. Ben was a forceful personality, and a fighter who, having ideas, would take them all the way. Many of us disagreed with him from time to time, but we all respected his personal integrity and steadfastness of purpose. Lancashire District will be the poorer while we shall all miss him. He fought always for the betterment of agency conditions and for the union—his ideas will go on!

Will members note that the address of the General Secretary is now 861/3 Fulham Road, S.W.6 (Tel. REN2400), and that in future all correspondence should be sent to this address.

## Make them APPLY for Membership

By W. H. HARRISON, C.C. (Hon. Sec. Sutton-in-Ashfield L.P.)

More views on the "Party Passengers" controversy. See also Readers' Forum.

Like S. C. Terry, of Dartford D.L.P. ("Labour Organiser," August) I believe in mass membership, also that we make membership of the party too easy, but cannot see how the creation of two classes of membership is going to alter this.

To create a class of members who will have no right to vote for twelve months on matters of party organisation at their Ward meeting would tend to create a feeling that the party is being run by a select clique, and it would be found that long before the 12 months had passed a very large percentage of the associate membership would have ceased paying contributions. It has to be remembered, too, that affiliated members who become

enrolled as members of their ward committees would still have the right to attend and vote.

With regard to being eligible to be nominated as a candidate for a local authority, in the local party of which I am secretary we have an unwritten law that before a nominee can be placed upon the Panel of Candidates he or she must have been a member at least twelve months. If they do get on, even then it is generally recognised that when the final selection comes at Wards unless they have been workers they rarely get chosen as candidates.

## How It Could Be Done

In my opinion, parties make the mistake of joining members too easily. A canvass is undertaken, canvassers

call and if the person canvassed wants to get rid of the canvasser he signs a form and sometimes receives a card, in other words, the canvasser enrols him as a member. I suggest that when a form is signed it should be an APPLI-CATION for MEMBERSHIP. These forms should be submitted to Executive or General Committee each month for endorsement or otherwise. If the application is accepted, the prospective member should be notified that his application has been accepted, at the same time notifying him of the date of Ward meeting and place. If the application was from a person who had previously been a member and had fallen out owing to arrears of contri-butions or some dispute, he should be notified that the party were prepared to take him on probation for three months. If at the end of the three months he proved himself a satisfactory member then he should be informed that his probation was ended and accepted as a member.

I firmly believe that once people found that they could not come in and out of the party when they chose it would create a feeling of pride in being a member instead of a "Well I DO pay a subscription to the Labour Party" feeling

## Don't Hog the Jobs

With regard to workers, are the members always to blame? I have found that too often officials get entrenched in a favourable position and they and they alone want to do all the jobs going, forgetting that in the party there are others who would welcome the opportunity to do some of these little tasks.

Why should the secretary run all social events? Would it not be wise to appoint a Social Secretary and committee? Let them run the thing, the party secretary acting as one of the members—not wanting to dominate but prepared to do as the committee wants. Same with propaganda. Membership collections. Party secretary coordinating the work, keeping a watchful eye for slackers, etc.

I have found in different parts of the country that too much importance is placed upon numbers. Get quality first, the numbers will follow. Give all members a chance to do something, set an example by helping as one of the team to do some of the unpleasant jobs and let the world see that they cannot get in and out of the party when they choose. A foundation will then be laid locally for a real live party.

## "Served on a palette!"



You've heard the expression "served on a plate"—but this is the first time you've seen the **Town Hall served on a palette!** Yet that's one of our jobs. In our work for municipal authorities, Education committees, Health, Housing, Road Safety and Library committees—we bring the tools of **our** trade—the artist's palette and brush—to **serve the community**.

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## This Apathy Shook Me By ROY SHINWELL, Govanhill D.L.P., Glasgow

As the ink on my local Ward Labour Association card is hardly two months dried, I realise that many older members may be quick to contest my right to align myself with Mr. S. C. Terry in his condemnation of party "passengers."

Having long ago been converted to the ideals of Socialism, I determined to join my local party organisation as soon as I was demobilised from the Forces. This I did about two months ago, and I must confess that, although my own enthusiasm hasn't yet been dampened in any way, I've been really shaken by the apathetic attitude of fifty per cent. of my fellow members.

Many of these have never put in an appearance at meetings during the last eight weeks or so, at least, and it is a sad and sorry fact that out of a potential active membership of eighty, only an average of about twelve men and women are seen at weekly meetings.

This means that the routine work of the Association, such as acting as delegates, canvassers, collectors, and so on, is falling on the shoulders of the faithful few, several of whom are struggling along trying to perform two or three regular jobs at the same time.

To say that this position is just not good enough will, I know, evoke the obvious comment from experience-hardened members—"I know, but once vou've been in as long as me, vou'll realise, etc., etc. . . . " However, I think that looking at the position from a purely financial viewpoint at least, it is far better to have only forty out of, say, eighty members who are active than to have only forty on the books altogether.

What's to be done? Frankly, I don't know. But as a young and enthusiastic member of a party which is having to face the bar of a public opinion over-influenced by the insidious propaganda of the powerful Tory press, I should like to hear some words of hope and encouragement from one or two experienced members in other

districts.

## Behind that Conference Agenda

By HAROLD WRATTEN

"What happened to our Party's resolution?"—that cry from the heart can be heard after Here a member of Head Office staff gives the answer. many Annual Conferences.

The inexperienced but conscientious new delegate to Conference is somewhat taken back when, on taking his seat, he is handed a compact little booklet headed "Composite Resolutions" containing the 24 items which, with other formal business, are to be discussed during the week.

He has probably spent several hours carefully studying a 64-page booklet, entitled "AGENDA," containing some 500 resolutions and 120 amendments, on at least 150 different subjects.

Having tried hard to get the gist of it all, he attends his G.M.C., who for about 21/2 hours "instructs" him. This consists of fierce debates on the first few pages; rather more cursory "For." "against" or "free hand" votes on the next dozen or so; then the chairman's ruling-"only time for two more; any-

thing special you want to decide."
Now this! Nine-tenths of it wiped out; and the rest cut to the bone. That

"free hand" has got to work overtime. He feels there is a catch in it somewhere-but where? His own party's resolution - on you know what - has disappeared into obscurity.

### Who Decides?

Who has the power to order this massacre? A thousand or more delegates come; at least a half want a say. Who decides who shall talk and what they shall talk about?

Each year Conference elects five of its number to act as a Conference Arrangements Committee for following year. Its Secretary is a fulltime member of H.O. staff, who of course have to do all the routine work it entails—which is quite a lot.

Conference sits for a week—about 32 working hours. Six or seven hours are taken up with necessary formal business—leaving about 25 hours for discussions.

Now look at this year's "Agenda"; over 600 points of view to be voiced. It just cannot be done.

But this is how the mass is reduced

to a manageable state.

Firstly, all resolutions are scrutinised on arrival to see that they conform to Constitution and Standing Orders. Doubts about dubious meanings have to be cleared up; several parties sending in practically identical motions must be approached to agree on wording; all sorts of queries, expected and unexpected, have to be cleared up.

Then they have to be sorted, categorised, printed and sent back to organisations for their amendments.

Then the whole paraphernalia has to be gone through again with the amendments.

### The Priorities

Correspondence and telephone calls galore from those who sent in too late, or who did not get their supplies in time for their meeting. (Incidentally, it takes our despatch staff about two or three days to send off a single issue, and printers' dates are very frail piecrust.) Then the wires are almost fused by the angry secretary who "simply must" have more than 10 copies. Paper is like gold-dust; each agenda is equal to about three or four propaganda pamphlets; but it is imperative each member of his G.M.C. has a copy for two hours' study.

We toil through this-to us-rather pointless palaver in the sacred name of Democracy-the vital principle that everybody may shove in an oar, regardless of whether it pushes the boat along

or merely stirs up mud.

By that time the Conference Arrangements Committee put wet towels round their heads, and try to make sense of it all.

First: Priorities of subjects. That is decided mainly by numerical popularity, influenced, of course, by national considerations.

Second: Co-ordination—trying to get those with analogous views to com-

promise on wording.

Third: Clarification—getting important conflicts of opinion clearly defined in amendments or alternative motions.

The Sausage Machine

This process goes on for a week or so by correspondence and on Saturday, and sometimes Sunday, before Conference by interviews with delegates.

This process is what we, in the office, irreverently call "The Old Sausage

Machine." It sounds brutal and callous, but without it you could not have a Conference at all-it would be a sheer dog fight. In 25 hours you cannot adequately discuss more than, say, 25 or 30 matters of vital public importance.

So that, Mr. Newcomer-to-Conference, is how and why the "Composite Resolu-tions" emerge. They are "crossreferenced" to the appropriate pages in the "Final"; this year, to aid the understanding and clarification of debates, Head Office issued a booklet on Background Facts.

But it is true that barely a quarter of those who put down resolutions get a chance to speak; while only about onesixth of the subjects put forward ever see the light.

It sounds a horrible Slaughter of the Innocents; it involves an enormous waste of time and energy, but while Conference follows its present form, or the Constitution is amended, I do not see how it can be otherwise. Do you? One final word. Within the limits

of existing customary procedure—which the Party, through Conference, alone can alter—the job is well, slickly and efficiently done.

You tell us quickly enough if it is

not.

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## Social Outings: Can We Help?

By BILL HAYWOOD, Liaison Officer, New Cross Empire, London

The People's Entertainment Society can offer attractive facilities to D.L.P.s for theatre and social outings. Here are some details. Bill Haywood is a former labour agent.

The People's Entertainment Society was formed in 1941, and among its founder-members were the Rt. Hon. A. Barnes, M.P., Mr. Levy, Mr. W. G. Daines, Mr. Elliot (late Editor of Reynolds), and many others from the Co-operative side.

During the first two years, little activity took place owing to the war. During 1944, the P.E.S. purchased its first theatre, which was the Theatre Royal in Huddersfield. This proved to be a success, and so in 1945, the P.E.S. took over the Chatham Empire, the Picture House, and a large block of premises in Chatham High Street. With the energy and drive of Mr. Barnes and the employees, the further experiment proved a great success, so much so that in 1946 the above theatre, the New Cross Empire, was also purchased. During 1947 the opportunity arose to buy the Theatre Royal, and in due course this was done.

## THEATRE PARTIES

Labour Parties in London can have special terms for theatre parties attending the New Cross Empire.

Thirty-two seats are offered for the price of twenty-two for the first house on Monday, Tuesday and Friday. Other special facilities are available.

Recent shows have included Lupino Lane in "Me and My Girl," repertory, variety, etc. Write for details to Bill Haywood, Peoples' Entertainment Society, New Cross Empire, S.E.14.

In the initial life of the P.E.S. a subsidiary company was formed called the Peoples Plays, and this body put on a number of cultural ventures such as symphony concerts at the Royal

Albert Hall. Ballet was also successfully run in London and the Provinces. With our own Repertory Company we produced "The Rochdale Pioneers," and further sponsored such plays as "They Came to a City," "Flare Path," "Ten Little Niggers," "How are they at Home?" and "Golden Fleece." We were also associated with Jack Hylton and others in the production of "Duet for Two Hands" and "No Room at the Inn."

Theatre in Every Town

It is the aim of P.E.S. to provide a theatre in every town, and if possible, hotels of a first-class nature. On the concert party side we have been able to provide artistes, etc., for the Cooperative Congress, Co-operative Society Conference, Trade Union A.G.M.s, Labour, Co-op. and other functions.

We also have a tours section, and during its inception over 700 theatre and seaside tours were conducted. This has been so successful that Mr. Turner, our Public Relations Officer, is well booked up in advance for 1948. One final point on this. If your organisation is interested it is possible for them to buy £1 shares in the Society. The interest payable on these shares in the last two years has been five per cent.

So far as New Cross Empire is concerned, this being in London, we are prepared to make concessions to organisations so that they may visit the theatre at a very cheap rate. If any D.L.P.s or local Labour Parties are interested I would urge upon you that the facilities we offer could extend your social activities in many ways.

Do not hesitate to write to me at New Cross Empire, New Cross Road, S.E.14. Any query you would like to make will be dealt with. Your problems in organising social events will be given consideration and help. This is a Peoples Society; make all the use of it that you can.

## MORTONS FOR STATIONERY

Write for samples and new List of ENVELOPES, DUPLICATING PAPERS, STENCILS, INKS, TYPEWRITER RIBBONS and CARBONS, etc., as snpplied to scores of Labour Party and Trade Union Offices.

MORTONS, 51 BAYLIS ROAD - LONDON, S.E.I

## Starting a Labour Journal

By KENNETH BRYAN, South Croydon D.L.P.

Croydon's "Labour Journal" is one of the best of the new local papers. It has won the praise of Michael Foot and other journalist M.P.s. Here is how it was started.

Croydon Labour Journal resulted from the perseverance of our Agent, Mr. G. G. Stubbert, plus the support of a small group of enthusiasts. We realised that with our own periodical we could not only provide a most useful medium, giving expression to the Party's many-sided activities, but also we could develop an offensive weapon with which to mitigate the effects of malicious Tory propaganda.

The Agent, Eric Messer, and myself were elected from the South Party's E.C. to launch the project and to act as the editors. We sought the advice of Mr. Arthur Bax, of the Press and Publicity Department at Transport House, and solicited the aid of a member of the Party who is a publisher. Being in this business myself, and to assist with the technicalities, I did the lay-out, and suggested the typography.

The other members of the E.C. O.K.d our suggestions, so we lined up our contributors and advertisers, made arrangements for circulation, fixed things up with the printer and so in due course received our proofs. From this our baby emerged-3,000 copies of

him, in fact.

### Reasons for Success

By contemporary standards it seems that we have produced a good job. If this is so, there are four reasons for it:

(1) We made sure that the technical side of the production was efficiently handled. (2) Our contributors are fairly representative of the Party as a whole. (3) We aim at the sound and nonsensational presentation of the Socialist case. (4) We heed all suggestions made to us but we act decisively.

### The Costs

It costs £32 for 3,000 copies. Blocks obtained ourselves are extra. Advertising covers one-fifth of our sixteen pages, and this is charged at the rate of £5 for a full page. We sell at twopence a copy, with bulk orders at the rate of one dozen at 1/6 per dozen, four dozen at 1/3 per dozen, and eight dozen at 1/- per dozen, which offers an inducement to individuals and organisations to take the journal in quanti-

The editorial staff is, of course, unpaid, as are the contributors. We are subsidised to the extent of £6 per month, which we hope to render unnecessary by the time we reach six issues.

## READERS' FORUM

## Is This Right?

As I am a firm believer in mass membership and the immense psychological effect of a large membership, I agree with most of the article by S. C. Terry in the August issue of the "Labour Organiser." But in my opinion it should be easy for anyone to join the Labour Party and everyone interested in the Labour Movement should be encouraged to become a fully paid up member. To my mind a person should be a fully paid up member of the Party for 12 months before his nomination is accepted for a councillor, member of the Local Party E.C., or the Divisional Party

E.C. I am of the opinion that in some cases it has been too easy for persons whose history will not bide looking at to be nominated to official position in the Party. I do hope that an affiliated member or trades union delegate who does not intend to be an individual member of the Party should not be allowed to enjoy an official position in the Party.

This is an item which should come before the National Executive, and the Labour Party Conference as soon

as possible.

Councillor W. A. Eden, Normanton (Yorkshire) L.P.

## Workers and Drones

Why moan about the "drones"? Every society has them. Let's approach the question from the other end and regularise the breed! Provide Associate Membership at a popular rate (say 2 6) with limited rights. Other societies do it: why not the L.P.:

Incidentally, not all drones are bad:

not by a long chalk! The chap who doesn't care for meetings may be worth a lot to the Party. The members who pay a 6d. to grind an axe are in another streets and need to be curbed. That is where the limited rights of associate membership will benefit the faithful, if provisions are wisely framed.

(Mrs.) A. Emrys Jones (Div. Sec., Cardiganshire D.L.P.).

## Does Your Party Need £100?

By Coun. H. EASTWOOD (Manchester City L.P.)

Here's a money-raising wheeze regularanteed to basst any Party's bank Balance. The Editor will welcome acta: s of any other proved (and legal!) money-raising projects. What has your Party done?

One hundred pounds would be a useful addition to the funds of any local Labour Party, and I beg to suggest a novel yet practical way of getting it. And please do not tell me it cannot be done because I have done it twice in two different towns.

It is a job for the Agent or Secretary mainly. Get the sanction of your Committee to organise a One-Day Bazaar. First arrange a Social Evening and invite all the members of your Committee, the Ward leaders, the Women's Section and the League of Youth, together with as many individual members as you care to.

Make sure that your M.P. and your local civic representatives are also invited. Send out a printed or Gesternered circular of invitation indicating the fact that there will be first-class artists: that refreshments will be served, and that there will be only one speech of a few minutes. That there will be no washing up for the women, and no collection. The Social will be free by invitation.

Then get to work and book one or two first-class local artists. Pay them if you must, but get them. And I do not mean the usual type of artist who sings to oblige the party. See the secretary of your local club. He will know the best of them. Then set he MFN manner is a treshments and do the washing-up It will be a change which will intrigue your Women's Section and they will come to the Social out of sheer curiosity to see what happens Now for the Social.

Men Must Serve

Start promptly. The Agent in the chair as compére. Put up a good show till the interval. Then a break for refreshments. All to be served by MEN.

When crockery is collected and the MEN are washing-up, the Agent will speak for a few minutes. All he has to do is to persuade each member of the audience to do TWO THINGS. One is to sign a form agreeing to give ONE ARTICLE to the Bazaar. The other is to promise or persuade ONE

## This Comrade Business

Thirty or forty years ago we, in the movement, wore red ties and called each other "Comrade"; or, if we were Fabians, by full carefully pronounced first names—no conventional titles such as "Mr." or "Esq." We were proud, even priggish, about our differences from other men.

But times and fortunes have changed. Our Party is no longer a small band of early Christian zealots defying the world; our adherents number half or more of the population. Our new recruits feel there is something stilted and "snifty" about our old conventions. Even our best friends poke fun at This Comrade Business.

What do you think—Comrades er Chums—er Gentlemen? Should we chuck it?

> PARTY WORKER, Wandsworth.

OTHER PERSON to give one article as well. Forms for signature should be handed round at once, signed, and collected on the spot. Then clear the floor and spend the rest of the evening in dancing.

The Agent will then sort the signatures into areas. Members of the League of Youth will readily assist in calling for the articles on any day in the week prior to the Bazaar. The Women's Section will gladly assist in the valuation, pricing and labelling of the articles brought in and will also be glad to act as stallholders on the day of the Bazaar.

Make it a Saturday afternoon and get your local M.P. or other prominent personality to open it. Charge a nominal sum for admission. Advertise it well and you will get a crowd there, all curious to learn what the OTHERS have given. Here is the real secret of success in the matter.

Every person who promises to give one article will probably give one of reasonable value or maybe more than one. So that 200 people will probably provide articles worth an average of 5/- each. So, with 200 at your social and 200 others whose signatures have been secured, there is your £100. The

charges for admission can be used to pay for your publicity and printing.

Women are Enthusiastic

Use the occasion, of course, for the exercise of the usual games and novelties. Ask-your Wards and Clubs to make a grant to the costs. Send a nicely-worded invitation for subscriptions to your local friends, as usual. Supplement all this, if necessary, by your collecting cards. Take a special collection at your Delegate Meeting. Invite your local Trade Union branches to help you and make sure you send an invitation to their officials to come to the Novelty Social.

And you will be surprised how EASY it will prove to be once you have "sold the idea" of novelty to your Committee, members and friends. The first time I tried it I had 236 people at the Social and I secured 514 articles. Those who could find no articles sent a Postal Order, usually 5/-, and we made a CLEAR profit of £122 10s. 6d. See what YOU can do. Remember your circular.

First-class artists. Free refreshments. No collection and no speeches and no washing-up. And every woman member of your Party will be enthusiastic from the word "go."

## Running a Labour Fête

By CHRISTOPHER SEWELL, Secretary, Aberayron (Cardiganshire) L.P. Fête

The idea of mixing politics with pleasure was adapted to put across the Labour cause in the little Liberal town of Aberayron, lying on Cardigan Bay. I am going to describe our attempt from the prosaic angle of organisation rather than in the form of colourful pictures. This is so that others may run similar fêtes, benefit by our experience and avoid our mistakes.

The success of advertisement depends both on its novelty and its constant reiteration. To distinguish our posters from others that clutter up the hoardings we had the whole of the top half filled with the message:

ABERAYRON IS THE SPOT COME AND SEE WHAT WE'VE GOT, FRIDAY, AUGUST 15th.

Also we had a streamer across one of the main roads and a loudspeaker

van touring the countryside for miles around boosting the fête.

## Pays to Advertise

As we had inserted many advertisements in the local press they printed an advance account of the speakers and items in our fête. Editors of provincial dailies and local weeklies were asked to send reporters and were supplied with photographs taken by our own photographer.

Our fête opened with a colourful carnival followed by a baby show designed to fetch young mothers to the fête. This should have been combined with an attempt to put across "What Labour is doing for the British Housewife," by a specially prepared demonstration stall, a short talk by the doctor on the National Health Bill

and plenty of leaflets. Unfortunately,

we let this opportunity slip by.

Also we tried hard to get an exhibition of what the Labour Government was doing for the country in order to help us counter the Tory "Trust the People" Exhibition, and to explain the economic crisis. Such exhibitions have proved a success on the continent and could be used with profit throughout Britain. Ministry exhibitions such as those from the National Coal Board and the Ministry of Agriculture are useful and Ministry of Food cooking demonstrations are always popular.

### Varied Amusements

Speakers should be on a gaily-decorated platform packed with important local Socialists. One or two local speakers should start the proceedings talking about specialist subjects with which they are acquainted before the star-speaker begins.

We made the mistake of having the political speeches in the evening when most of the country people had left the fête. Actually it would have been better for us to have had two series of political addresses at 3.30 p.m. and 7 p.m.

As great a variety of amusements as possible should be kept going continuously. A shooting-range, roll-apenny stall, coker-nut shies, and so on, are what really make the fête. People want refreshment, and our tea-tent, ice-cream and pop kept them on the field.

We ended with dancing on the green to loudspeaker music with the young people wearing gay paper hats with Socialist slogans on them, such as: "The Labour Party for Equality of Opportunity."

## PROFILE BY JACK CUTTER

## His Golden Rules

Every now and then a young man in his late teens or early twenties will come to my office and tell me he has decided to go in for political organisation as a career and will ask me how to set about the business of finding a footing on the first rung of the ladder.

Swallowing the cynicism which prompts me to ask "What ladder?" and resisting the temptation to hand out Mr. Punch's famous monosyllabic advice, I have developed a good leading for avuncular counsel to such aspirants.

I once knew a young man (I say) about your age who had the same ambition and the same problem. Political organisation had wormed its way under his skin and into his bones. Time for him was not divided into days, weeks and months, but into periods between one election and the next. His idea of fresh air was the intoxicating atmosphere of an election committee room—that unique bouquet composed of printer's ink, strawboards, envelope gum, mud, sweat and cheers.

He was active in his Ward Committee, chaired its meetings, wrote its posters, led squads of canvassers for votes and membership, drafted its reports and led its delegation to the Divisional Party's General Committee.

No. 14. FRANK SHEPHERD

### Had What It Takes

Having decided that this was the life for him, he went along to the Party's office in his town on every occasion he had spare time from his ward duties, and began to make himself useful, turning the duplicator, looking after the delegates' register and seemed to be always on the spot when there was a job to be done.

Soon the Agent (who, like all Agents, had private categories for his coworkers) had reclassified him from the "useful" category into that of "wellnigh indispensable." He was elected Assistant Secretary to the Divisional Party and tackled every job that came along with a ready, impulsive enthusiasm which was natural to him and which was, unconsciously, his strongest asset.

Nowadays (I continue) that same young man is District Organiser for the Home and Southern Counties and Secretary of England's largest Regional Council. Then I pause to enable the impressed aspirant to murmur "Coo!"

or "Oo-er!" in awe-stricken breathlessness, inwardly wondering what to do when I strike one who says "So what?"

The point is that Frank Shepherd (for, of course, my shining example was, as the Victorian novelists so delightfully say, none other) had what it takes from the very beginning, has always concentrated with gusto on his job and has no designs on any other, being completely engrossed in his work as he was in the days when he delivered ward meeting notices on one of those push-bikes which the average person could mount only with a step-ladder.

Rules Expert

Although I was in very close contact with Frank in those early days in the Reading Labour Party, our ways parted just before the 1935 election and I lost touch with him for a year or two-My records and my memory are alike hazy about his movements in that period, but I believe he went as Agent to one of the Cardiff divisions and later transferred to Greenwich.

Then he went to Transport House as assistant in the National Agent's department after Tom Baxter had left to take over the East Midlands Region, and once again his familiar signature appeared among my daily correspondence, usually on some obscure point of constituency party constitution.

It has been my experience that Parties suffering from rules and constitution troubles are usually going through an unhappy and ineffective phase, and the task of handling rules revision, which has always fallen to the N.A.D. assistant, is one of the most thankless jobs in the movement. But it is also a great builder of experience, and, when, almost immediately after appointment to the District Organisership of the Southern Counties, Frank was faced with the task of creating 25 new Divisional Parties as a result of the temporary carve-up of the overgrown Greater London constituencies in preparation for the then pending General Election, that experience stood him in good stead.

He and his colleague, Grace Tavener, established a series of all-time records for rules adoption meetings. It is said that in one case a new D.L.P. received, reviewed, debated and accepted Frank's draft of their new rules in 15 mniutes, and that 30 minutes was the outside

limit of time required for the job. It had to be done speedily, for, although the election was expected to come in October, candidates had to be nominated and selected and the electoral arrangements set afoot. When, in fact, the election came three months earlier than the anticipated time, everything was well advanced in the new divisions, and a glance at the election results in that district will show to what good purpose such energy was expended.

### Never Kids Himself

Everywhere in Britain north of the Trent we hear a great deal of the social and economic problems created by the "drift South." Frank Shepherd's area provides striking proof that the drift is a fact. The area consists of the seven counties of Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Hampshire, Kent, Middlesex, Surrey and Sussex. Three years ago there were 61 constituencies in those counties. At the General Election of 1945 there were 86. The recommendations of the Boundary Commission provide for 100!

The Southern Regional Council, formed this year with Frank as its secretary, is our largest region numerically, if not geographically, and Frank has his work cut out for him in keeping a fatherly eye on 100 Divisional Parties and conducting the administrative work of his Regional Council.

But as usual, and as always, he contemplates this task with zest and enthusiasm. It has never occurred to him to complain of its magnitude. On the contrary, he seems to me to be secretly delighted at the prospect and impatient for the redistribution to be settled so that he can get on with the job.

Frank is always himself. He never poses before others and never kids himself. All his ideas (and they are many and good); all his enthusiasms (and they are vivid and real) are there for all to see and to share. That they are seen and shared is the reason for his popularity and his success.

Come to think of it, the instinct which has prompted me to quote him as an example to would-be workers in our particular vineyard is a sound one. I doubt if I could find a better example and you will allow me the opinion that I have plenty of good quotable material.

PARTY CONVERSATION

## This Job of Public Relations

By COLIN MACPHEE

WHAT'S public relations? It's a fancy title for something that in essence is really very simple. In our case it means "selling" the Party to the public and in ensuring that Labour's case is given a fair hearing throughout every constituency.

As we move into a period of bitter anti-Government campaigning, the adoption by all D.L.P.s of an effective public relations policy becomes a first

priority.

The Tories have seen the need here. They are appointing Public Relations Officers at handsome salaries in each of their twelve regions. Well, we can't throw money about in this lighthearted fashion. But what we can do is to make more effective use of our existing resources.

"Savvy" is Needed

SOME agents make first-rate P.R.O.s. They have the knack, the zest, and the political "savvy" for the job. Other parties, again, have one or two enthusiasts who likewise have a flair for this type of work and are doing a grand job. In all too many parties, however, much too little of a "public relations"

nature is attempted.

What does it involve? It means seeing that the local Press is supplied regularly with Party news and is kept in touch with developments which might make news. It means publicising your M.P., your candidate, your councillors, and other Party personalities on every possible occasion. It means that those anti-Labour letters to the Editor are answered-promptly and adequately. It means that regular leaflets on topical problems (you'll find the Head Office "Brieflets" helpful here) are issued These are just some of the many practical jobs which can and should be done. Many more are outlined in "Putting it Over" (available from Transport House, 71/2d. post free).

But above all, an effective public relations job means that persons living in a particular constituency are given the impression that the local Labour Party is alive, vigorous and go-ahead, and that the folk in it are proud and active supporters of a progressive Government. Does your party measure up to this test?

### Live Publicity

SHEFFIELD, for instance, is producing some very effective local Party publicity The Press and Publicity Committee of the Trades and Labour Council have published five good leaflets which outline in telling fashion the achievements of the Labour Government. The latest one, "Two Years of Labour Rule," is being issued as part of the recruiting drive, and contains a Party membership form. An advert. from the local Co-operative Society has helped to defray part of the cost of the leaflet. Here's an idea which might well be adopted by other parties.

In preparing the leaflets Sheffield has made good use of the "Brieflets" published by Head Office. The Trac'es and Labour Council also publish a lively News Letter containing good propaganda points each month.

TWO of Kidderminster's most enthusiastic Party members are both aged 82 years of age. They are Mr. and Mrs. W. Bint. Despite their age, both faithfully attend Party meetings.

Morgan Phillips has sent a letter of congratulation and appreciation to the

lively old couple.

Can any Party cap this record of octogenarian enthusiasm? Who is the oldest active member in your Party? Let's hear from you, colleagues.

### (Continued from next page)

allowed, must put in a Return of his own. To put in a Return covering the joint candidates and merely each candidate signing it would not appear to be in order. Each of the candidates must make up a Return based on the allocation of costs, but the Returns can be sent in together with the total bills and receipts attached to them. A borough party providing material to candidates can give receipts to them for the proportionate amounts involved.

### BOROUGH ELECTIONS

## Poll: Count: Returns

Extensions of Polling Hours.—Notice must be sent in by or before Saturday, October 25th.

Scotland.—This does not apply.

Candidates' Right to Free Use of Schoolrooms.—In effect, Sec. 69 L.G.A. 1933 gives candidates the same claim to the use of public elementary schools as for Parliamentary elections. No payment can be claimed for use of the rooms, but charges can be made for incidental expense, such as light, heat, cleaning, etc.

Scotland.—Similar provision applies.

Motor Cars.—No vehicle licensed for hire can be used for conveying electors to and from the poll. Note that a candidate can use his car if not a hired one, for conveying electors to and from the poll. If it is a hired car or a taxi he cannot do so, because of the general prohibition against the use of such vehicles. Coupons for petrol can be supplied to lenders of cars, but no petrol must be supplied or paid for on behalf of the lenders.

Appointment of Polling and Counting Agents.—Notices must be received by the R.O. at least two clear days before day of election. The last day is, therefore, Wednesday, October 29th. Send the notices before this last day, if possible. Ascertain from the R.O. how many Counting Agents are allowed. The agents must make a declaration of secrecy. The R.O. will supply the declaration forms.

Scotland.—Notices must be received by the R.O. at least three days prior. Loud Speakers on Polling Day.—There is no electoral prohibition to prevent a candidate using a loud speaker on the streets on polling day, provided he keeps clear of the entrances to polling stations. The question of using them is one for some discretion. If a canvass has been done it may not be desirable to stir up the opposition voters also. On the other hand, in very strong Labour roads its psychological effect may be good. Give due consideration to the matter for best advantage.

Close of Poll.—The poll must close precisely on the stroke of the hour at 8 or 9 p.m. as the case may be. It has been held that voters who had received ballot papers on or before the hour can deliver them into the ballot box, but no other papers must be issued. Where parties from past experience anticipate late queus at a polling station, they should make endeavours to persuade voters to go to the

poll earlier

Saturday Count.—Ordinarily the count will proceed on the Saturday evening, but if under paragraph 33 of the Second Schedule of the 1933 Act there is a postponement of the Count, it would take place at 9 o'clock on the Monday morning. There is apparently no legal objection to the Count taking place on the Sunday, but there is no obligation on the R.O. to do so.

Recount.—A candidate or agent may request a recount before the result is declared, but there is no statutory provision for this and consent is at the discretion of

the R.O.

**Equality of Votes.**—The R.O. may give a casting vote by word of mouth or in writing. If he does not do so, the double return makes the election void and a new election will follow.

Scotland,-Decision is by lot.

Imprint must appear on all bills, placards and posters.

Flags, Banners and other Marks of Distinction are prohibited.

Election Insurances of Staff and Voters.—Any paid helpers should be insured under the Employers' Liability Act in respect of indemnity against accidents, etc. Though lenders of cars have their own third party insurance, it is thought desirable for a candidate to take out insurance to cover himself against liability for injury to the public and carried voters.

Claims within 14 days. Payments within 21 days.

Return and Declaration within 28 days.

Election Returns of Joint Candidates.—Each candidate has to put in his own signed declaration, and in order to show he has not exceeded the maximum expenditure

(Continued on previous page)

## Labour Party Publications

### **PAMPHLETS**

DISCUSSION SERIES:

THE RISE OF THE LABOUR PARTY L.D.S.1
THE BANK OF ENGLAND AND THE NATION L.D.S.3
LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM L.D.S.6
NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE L.D.S.6
NATIONALISATION OF COAL L.D.S.7
IS WOMAN'S PLACE IN THE HOME L.D.S. No. 9
NATIONALISATION OF TRANSPORT L.D.S. 10
APPROACH TO FOREIGN POLICY L.D.S.11
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING, L.D.S. 12
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Post free: 1 copy, 3d.; 12, 1s. 6d. 100, 10s. 0d.

ILLUSTRATED.

REBIRTH OF A NATION, 5d., post free.

### GENERAL:

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IF THE TORIES HAD WON, by Michael Foot VILLAGE LIFE AND THE LABOUR PARTY, by Cicely McCall

1 copy 3d, 12 for 1s.6d.; 100 10s.

ELECTRICITY TRANSFORMED

CARDS ON THE TABLE

TEAM WORK FOR THE NATION, Post free: 12, 9d.; 100, 6s. 0d.

### LEAGUE OF YOUTH :

LABOUR'S LEAGUE OF YOUTH Post free: 1 copy, 3d.; 12, 1s. 6d.; 100, 10s. 0d

### BOOKS

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GUIDE TO THE NATIONAL INSURANCE (INDUSTRIAL INJURIES) ACT,
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CONDUCT OF PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS Post free: 1 copy, 3s. 10d.

CONDUCT OF LOCAL ELECTIONS (England and Wales) Post free: 1 copy, 1s. 3d. LOCAL GOVERNMENT HANDBOOK, 1946-1947 Post free: 1 copy, 1s. 6d.

EVERYDAY SONGS FOR LABOUR FESTIVALS Post free: 1 copy, 1s, 3d,

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LEAGUE OF YOUTH BADGES—stud and brooch—red and gilt enamel Post free: 1s. 6d. each, 15s. 0d. per dozen

### SUBSCRIPTION SERVICES:

LITERATURE SUBSCRIPTION (Pamphlets, leaflets, booklets, Annual Report, Diary) 15aper year, post free.

LABOUR PRESS SERVICE (issued monthly) 4s. per year, post free.

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LABOUR WOMAN (issued monthly) 3s. per year, post free.

LABOUR ORGANISER (issued monthly) 5s. per year, post free.

1.ABOUR FORUM (issued quarterly) 2s. 4d. per year, post free, YOUNG SOCIALIST (issued monthly) 2s. per year, post free,

Orders and Subscriptions should be sent to:

THE LABOUR PUBLICATIONS DEPARTMENT Transport House, Smith Square, London, S.W.1